

matters that have been State law since the beginning of this Constitution, they took it away from the States and gave them orders. When it came to lawsuits of any kind, not just manufactured products but automobile accidents, people slipping and falling on the stairs, the Republican Party put through an amendment that makes those matters of national concern. We are going to be debating term limits. I said to a couple of the Republicans, well, are we going to have uniform national standards?

They said, "Of course," some of the Republicans have said, "We can't leave that up to the States. That's too important." The fate of poor children, that is not too important. And we know that the States are subjected to a competition among themselves for industry, industry which can decide whether it is from overseas or here where to move. They will tell a State, "We don't think your taxes are low enough. We think your benefits are too high." So what we have is a deliberate dismantling of this safety net, sketchy as it now is, sent back to the States, and the absolute predictable conclusion is that poor 2- and 3- and 4-year-olds will be poorer and worse off in the future.

The same is true with the school lunch program and with other programs. The military budget will go up. The space budget will be protected. The House gym will stay open. We will be OK, but poor children will be the victims of an assault unlike any we have seen in a long time.

I hope that the House will indeed stand up for America by saying that is not the kind of country we want to live in.

A DISTURBING DECISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to try and respond to the previous speaker, the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I will just simply say we will be debating welfare this week and if the gentleman represented a welfare program that was working, I do not think there would be the need for change and change is what we are trying to do to make it work better. I want to talk about a niche of the welfare problem.

In the 1980's, approximately one-half of the hemophilia community in the United States, that is between 8,000 and 10,000 people, became infected with the virus that causes AIDS through the use of contaminated blood clotting products, products which U.S. Government agencies have direct regulation and oversight over. More than 30 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have joined me already in offering H.R. 1023. It is a bill to establish a government compensation program for the victims of this tragedy. This bill is

known as the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act, named for the 15-year-old Florida boy who died of hemophilia-associated AIDS in 1992, that I knew.

Its premise is that the Federal Government which has taken on the unique obligation to safeguard the blood supply and regulate the sale of blood products failed to respond to clear warning signs in time to prevent the tragedy. Records indicate that there were serious red flags about the dangers of blood-borne diseases even in the early 1980's although our understanding of course of the implications of AIDS has evolved in the years somewhat after that.

Hemophilia sufferers are often described as the canaries in the coal mine because when something goes wrong with the blood supply they usually succumb first because they use a blood clotting factors known as Factor. A single dose of Factor is often manufactured from the pooled blood of thousands of people, placing hemophiliacs at an extraordinary risk for blood-borne diseases.

According to industry estimates from the early 1980's, the blood of one infected donor could end up contaminating between half a million to 5 million units of Factor, potentially infecting as many as 125 hemophiliacs in a given year. The risks for hemophiliacs were enormous during that crucial period of time and we are seeing the results today. Nearly 2,000 hemophiliacs died of AIDS between 1981 and 1993 from contaminated blood and many more including members of their families are now suffering from its debilitating effects. My view has been that the Federal Government must share their part of the responsibility for what happened with the industry that manufacturers blood products because we have responsibility for oversight.

The hemophilia community is currently seeking redress from four major pharmaceutical companies through the courts. They have always known that this would be an uphill fight. Manufacturers of blood products have special protection from liability under most State laws which grant them status as providers of services, not products, when they make blood products. As a result, seeking judicial redress for harm caused by these products is a very difficult undertaking. Still, hemophiliacs believed in their case and have pursued their legal options as is their right in a free society. However, over this weekend, something very disturbing happened. The Seventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Illinois issued an unsettling ruling in a pending negligence class action lawsuit.

Writing for the court in overturning an earlier ruling regarding certification of the class, Judge Richard Posner appears to have concluded that this group of victims may not constitute a class because doing so could "hurl the industry into bankruptcy."

The judge seemed highly concerned that despite the protections that al-

ready exist for blood product manufacturers under State law, a jury in a class action case could provide awards that would ruin the industry.

I am troubled by what appears to be a greater concern on the part of the judge for the solvency of a multibillion-dollar industry than the rights of victims to join together in seeking justice here in America.

As a member of this House, I have no intention of becoming involved in a pending matter before the judiciary obviously, especially since reports suggest that the claimants will appeal the ruling. Still as we seek to do our part in meeting Government's obligation to victims of hemophilia-associated AIDS, we have got to recognize that the judicial option may be closing for these victims, perhaps providing even greater impetus for relief coming from the U.S. Congress.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to look closely at H.R. 1023, the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act. It is the right thing to do and may be the only way out for these folks. It is the right thing to do now, this week especially, because this is the week we are discussing meaningful ways to deliver relief to truly needy Americans. Believe me, these 8,000 to 10,000 victims are people who are in desperate need.

WELFARE REFORM OR CUTS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a little of my time at first to talk about what I call the very mean-spirited, very radical welfare reform proposal that is being proposed by the majority Republican Party that would take money away from school lunches, from school breakfast programs, and take it away from needy kids.

I have spent some time in the last couple of weeks visiting with some of those programs. It is not just me saying this, but the State of Missouri, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has analyzed their proposal and points out that there will be about 10 percent reduction in some of the programs for our school lunch kids. Then I look at the part that has to do with the food stamps and AFDC and I see further just cuts, not reform.

I thought we were here for welfare reform. This is not reform, these are just cuts. How do I say that? Not just me again, but again the State of Missouri saying the same thing, not HAROLD VOLKMER saying that. We know that they are cutting a total of well over 30, \$40 billion from these programs, just cuts, to take things away, along with, just like last Thursday, we did the cuts from the elderly for the heating assistance in the winter, we cut back on the